

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 CARACA 09811 122251Z

61

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

SCCT-01 SY-05 USSS-00 FBIE-00 A-01 ACDA-07 /071 W

----- 106444

P 122157Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4359

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE CARACAS 9811

EO 11652 NA

TAGS: PINS ASEC PINT VE

SUBJ: NIEHOUS KIDNAPPING CALDERA MEETS WITH PEREZ;

PEREZ AGREES TO ABIDE BY ANY SUPREME COURT DECISIONS

MRS NIEHOUS OFFERS AWARD OF BS 2 MILLION.

REF: CARACAS 9744, 9631

1. FORMER PRESIDENT RAFAEL CALDERA MET WITH PRESIDENT PEREZ ON THE MORNING OF AUG 11. FOLLOWING THIS MEETING, CALDERA TOLD PRESS THAT WHILE THE QUESTION OF THE TWO IMPRISONED DEPUTIES IS SENSITIVE, IT IS A TRANSITORY ONE, AND THE DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM IS NOT THREATENED BY RECENT DEVELOPMENTS. USING WATERGATE AS AN ANALOGY FOR VENEZUELA SITUATION, CALDERA SAID " I THINK THAT IT IS DIFFICULT TO CONCEIVE OF A SITUATION MORE DELICATE THAN THAT IN US INVOLVING WATERGATE, BUT NO ONE WOULD THINK TO SAY THAT THIS PUT INTO DANGER THE DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM(THERE)." CALDERA ALSO TOLD THE REPORTERS THAT HE DID NOT PRESENT PEREZ WITH ANY SPECIFIC COPEI COMPLAINTS. CALDERA CONCLUDED BY NOTING THAT BOTH PRINCIPLE PARTIES SHARE RESPONSIBILITY TO SUPPORT THE COUNTRY'S DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM.

2. PRESIDENT PEREZ, AFTER MEETING CALDERA, HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE DURING WHICH HE DENIED THERE IS ANY DEEP-SEATED CONFLICT BETWEEN AD AND COPEI. HE ALSO BRUSHED ASIDE ALLEGATIONS OF A CON-

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 CARACA 09811 122251Z

FLICT BETWEEN THE FISCAL GENERAL MEDINA(CARACAS 9744) AND THE

GOV. REGARDING THE LATTER, PEREZ SAID THAT ATTORNEY GENERAL MEDINA HAS A NECESSARY AND FUNDAMENTAL ROLE TO PLAY IN SAFEGUARDING CONSTITUTIONAL PROCEDURES HE COMMENTED THAT MEDINA'S AUG 10 REQUEST TO THE SUPREME COURT DID NOT INVOLVED ANY ACCUSATION AGAINST THE EXECUTIVE, BUT MERELY ASKED THE SUPREME COURT TO MAKE A DECISION RE-GRADING THE CONSTITUTIONAL STATUS OF THE TWO DEPUTIES. HE THEN SAID CATEGORICALLY THAT THE EXECUTIVE WILL RESPECT ANY DECISION THAT THE SUPREME COURT MAY MAKE IN THE CASE.

3. PEREZ THEN CITED SERIES OF CASES IN THE 1960S IN WHICH MILITARY COURTS TRIED DEPUTIES WITHOUT RECOURSE TO CIVIL COURTS AS PRECEDENT FOR PRESENT GOV POSITION. FURTHER, PEREZ SAID THAT IT WAS IN-ACCURATE TO HOLD THAT GOV DECIDED TO CONSIDER THE NIEHOUS KIDNAPPING AS A CRIME INVOLVING SEDITION AND THEREFORE PROPERLY WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF THE MILITARY COURTS ONLY AFTER THE KILLING OF RODRIGUEZ. RATHER, SAID THE PRES, THE GOV HAD FROM THE BEGINNING CONSIDERED THE ACTS OF THE KIDNAPPERS AS INVOLVING ARMED REBELLION THEREFORE AS MILITARY CRIMES. HE CITED THE FACT THAT THE GOV DECIDED TO ACQUIRE THE SHARES OF OWENS-ILLINOIS ON APR 7, THIS WAS DONE BECAUSE GOV CONSIDRED THE COMPANY TO BE "AN ACCOMPLICE IN A MILITARY REBELLION" BECAUSE IT PUBLISHED THE KIDNAPPERS' MANIFESTO.

4. TURNING TO ROLE OF INTERIOR MINISTER LEPAGE, PEREZ SAID THAT WHEN LEPAGE STATED TO THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES THAT GOV WOULD USE STANDARD CONSTITUTIONAL PROCEDURES AGAINST MEZA AND HERRERA THAT WAS IN FACT GOV POLICY AT THAT TIME: ONLY SUBSEQUENTLY DID GOV DECIDE TO MAKE USE OF MILITARY COURT PROCEDURES. THIS DECISION, IN TURN, WAS BASED ON DECISION BY GOV TO CONSIDER DEPUTIES' INVOLVEMENT AS AN ACT OF MILITARY REBELLION, AND CONSEQUENTLY, IN THE EXECUTIVE'S VIEWS, WAS NOT SUBJECT TO NORMAL CONSTITUTIONAL PROCEDURES.

5. AT 5PM PRESS CONFERENCE AUG 11, MRS DONNAL NIEHOUS TOLD REPORTERS THAT SHE IS PREPARED TO PAY AN AWARD OF BS 2 MILLION FOR INFO LEADING TO THE WHEREABOUTS OF HER HUSBAND. SHE SAID THAT "SHE FEARED THAT THE PEOPLE OF VENEZUELA HAD FORGOTTEN HER HUSBAND, " AND THAT CONSEQUENTLY SHE AND A GROUP OF FRIENDS HAD COLLECTED THE BS 2 MILLION WHICH SHE IS PREPARED TO MAKE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 CARACA 09811 122251Z

AVAILABLE TO ANYONE WHO HAS INFO ABOUT HER HUSBAND'S LOCATION OR "WHO CAN AID ME IN SECURING HIS FREEDOM". SHE NOTED THAT SUCH INFO COULD BE PASSED THRU CARDINAL QUINTERO. SHE EMPHASIZED THAT DURING THE FIVE MONTHS HER HUSBAND HAS BEEN HELD THEY COMPLETED 14 YEARS OF MARRIAGE AND THAT TODAY(AUG 11) WAS BILL NIEHOUS' BIRTHDAY. SHE ENDED HER SHORT DECLARATION BY ASKING "HOW LONG DO WE HAVE TO WAIT?" SHE REFUSED TO RESPOND TO ANY REPORTER'S QUESTION.

6. OPPOSITION WALK-OUT IN CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES APPEARS
TO HAVE ENDED. WE ARE CHECKING AND WILL REPORT FUTHER
VAKY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: KIDNAPPING, PRESIDENT, TRIALS, REWARDS, MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: powellba
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976CARACA09811
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760311-0094
From: CARACAS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760861/aaaacbje.tel
Line Count: 119
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 CARACAS 9744
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: powellba
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 JUL 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <05 NOV 2004 by powellba>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NIEHOUS KIDNAPPING CALDERA MEETS WITH PEREZ; PEREZ AGREES TO ABIDE BY ANY SUPREME COURT DECISIONS MRS NIEHOUS OFFERS AWARD OF BS 2 MILLION.
TAGS: PINS, ASEC, PINT, VE, (NIEHOUS, WILLIAM F), (HERRERA, FORTUNADO), (MEZA, SALON)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006